(d) if so, the reaction of Government thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) User fee is being levied under the provisions of National Highway Act, 1956 as amended by Parliament. Government has approved the ceiling rates for various categories of vehicles in July, 1997. These rates have been fixed after giving due consideration to the savings accrued to users on vehicle operating cost, damage caused to the road and willingness to pay. On the improved facilities, user fee charged is much less than the savings accruing to the user.

(b) to (d) Representations have been received from individuals/ organisations for reducing toll fee, giving rebate/concession or for replacement of levy of fee by additional cess on petrol and diesel. A committee has been constituted by the Government to examine the methodology of working out quantum of toll charges.

National Highways in Himachal Pradesh

551. SHRI ANIL SHARMA: Will the Minister of ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have sanctioned any amount for construction and widening of various National Highways in Himachal Pradesh;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the details of funds likely to be released for the purpose?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ROAD TRANSPORT AND HIGHWAYS (SHRI SHRIPAD YESSO NAIK): (a) yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) In the last year and current year, 29 works amounting to Rs. 67.12 crores have been sanctioned for construction and widening of National Highways in Himachal Pradesh. The allocation for National Highway works in Himachal Pradesh in the year 2003-04 is Rs. 47.00 crores.